2 THE INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT

THE SOLIDARITY OF INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SOCIETY

The importance of civil society in forming the basic building blocks of democratic governance cannot be overstated. The encouragement and assistance of links forged with civil society outside have been vital in the formation of broad-based coalitions of activists and reformers in such struggles, as the case studies on Chile and South Africa demonstrate, as do the experiences today in all the countries where aspirants to reform are seeking inclusive democratic change.

The "inside" story is essential. Within countries in transition, success will, to a large extent, be determined by the availability of human capital that the country can deploy to confront the very difficult tasks ahead. Difficulties in democratic transitions in Libya were exacerbated by its long history of civil society suppression. As a result of the suppression, there was no civil society to speak of. People had not had any opportunity to gain adequate experience in self-governance of their own affairs through local groups for activities such as issues of women's and youth rights, ecological protection, free press, culture and performance, home or landowners' rights or professions such as law or architecture.

Such groups need not have explicit political goals to qualify as incubators of the human capital that is essential for self-governance. In South Africa, for example, many African National Congress (ANC) organizers had gained earlier experience by setting up football clubs. A more recent example might be the network of daycare centres for single mothers established under the Catholic Church in Cuba, tolerated by the authorities because of public perception that the state's daycare facilities were overloaded and under-resourced. Most of the young women using the alternate facility and directing its activities in each local chapter were taking decisions over a key aspect of their own lives for the first time, rather than just accommodating themselves to a top-down state apparatus. It is through such experiences that members of civil society learn the necessity and practice of compromise in working with others, listening to others, self-starting and personal accountability, and transparency.

In most democracies, programs to support the development of these skills in emerging leaders and eventual administrators of newly transited democracies are offered through educational facilities, leadership programs and the targeted training of professional cadres. For example, the supporters of the Syrian National Coalition are being trained in municipal administration in sites in the region. They benefit from the support of the extensive international networks of foundations, agencies and organizations in democratic countries with a mandate to promote contact and democracy development across borders. Helping them make the connections is an essential task of the new democratic diplomacy.

In response, authoritarian regimes are increasingly limiting space for civil society to operate. They often ban outside financial and other assistance for civil society from foreign governments, or make an example of reformers. For instance, Cuba has made it a criminal act to accept financial support from foreign governments. Rulers such as Russian President Vladimir Putin attempt to portray reformers as anti-patriotic, in the pay of foreign embassies. In an extreme example of the confusion of perceptions of the authoritarians, Iranian prosecutors in the Tehran "show trials" charged the accused with being "arms of the velvet revolution…the women's movement, the human rights movement, the labor-syndicate movement, non-governmental organizations and civil-ethnic movements." In effect, the prosecution was indicting the Iranian people themselves as being anti-patriotic. The sobering reality, though, is that such paranoid circumstances have made direct embassy and other external financial support for local civil society, however modest, risky in some locales, especially for the recipients.

International civil society is increasingly put in the position of picking up the slack, not because they are "agents" of governments, but because of the solidarity of their core missions. Their credibility and effectiveness establish them as adversaries for authoritarian governments ill at ease with having to compete, which is why Russian and other authorities are now turning to harassing international humanitarian and human rights agencies such as Amnesty, Médecins sans Frontières or Human Rights Watch.

International NGOs such as these receive the vast majority of their funding from private contributions and only receive democratic government financing for very specific programs. They ensure that their in-the-field democracy support programs are at a demonstrable arm's length from any government. Nonetheless, their activity is under stress in several locales where repressive governments operate seemingly under the delusion that their publics can be closed off from the world around them.

A NEW PARADIGM FOR DIPLOMACY

As both a profession and practice, diplomacy is undergoing radical change as it opens to public diplomacy, even though, as the signatory foreign ministers point out in the Foreword, "Outdated stereotypes of our profession persist."

The conduct of diplomatic relations was once strictly on a state-to-state basis, pursued through private exchanges between diplomats and government officials. In recent years, however, the practice of diplomacy has "gone public" in many democratic nations and has taken on more of a human face. For most democracies, the days when their embassies were concerned only with maintaining "good relations" with the host government, irrespective of its character, are long past, as a former diplomat recalled of his mandate in Burma/Myanmar in the 1980s, when human rights were not high on the hierarchy of embassy priorities. Indeed, bilateral relationships and strategic engagement, even with authoritarian regimes, can be put to use to support the rights of civil society and democracy advocates in the host country.

Today, ambassadors and diplomats are much more likely to emphasize broader and direct engagement with the people of the host countries, not just government officials. The *Handbook* documents the many ways that embassies and ambassadors give public communication pride of place.

Diplomatic communications platforms are only one international channel, however, and by no means the most important. International "relations" are today composed of a myriad of non-governmental contacts. Everywhere, international networks of NGOs, scholars, researchers, business people and citizens are forming around issues, interests and tasks, all facilitated by communications technologies. The working landscape for internationalists and democratic activists is multifaceted.

Contemporary diplomacy needs to adapt to respond — to be, in the words of Ambassador Jií Gruša at the Maputo meeting of the International Forum on Diplomatic Training, "a tree with many roots." Embassies and consulates are going beyond public diplomacy and outreach, becoming brokers promoting contact and communication between the peoples and NGOs and groups of both sending and host countries. Democratic embassies, therefore, need to promote and defend the rights of people to so communicate.

IMPLICATIONS OF AN ERA OF GLOBAL COMMUNICATIONS

Article 19 of the UN Declaration of Human Rights guarantees that all people can "seek, receive, and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers." In deepening the truth that all democrats are potential partners, the revolution in information technologies and techniques has dramatically altered international reality by providing, at least for those with the necessary means, virtually free access to information from outside — unless local authorities block it.

The demonstrable power of popular interconnectivity beyond the control of the state has had the inevitable result that attempts to block it are on the rise. The globalization of information makes the erection of barriers and firewalls ultimately futile, though authoritarian regimes keep trying to stifle both connections to, and

awareness of, norms elsewhere, as well as the comparing of notes on best policies and practices. The young, who are increasingly new-technology literate, are connected to each other at home and abroad through their computers and mobile communications devices.

The cascade of new communications technologies has had a profound impact on events, not all of which are positive. Terrorist and xenophobic groups also use these technologies to mobilize and recruit supporters, and even convey lethal information on the fabrication of weapons of mass murder, without mediation or moderating influence. Films and hate texts that demonize Islam continue to burst like firestorms on volatile youth in the Middle East and South Asia. In Kenya, organized racist messages circulated to millions through cellphone texts prior to the January 2008 elections that broke down along tribal lines. In the struggle between the government and military against "Red Shirt" opposition in Thailand in May 2010, both sides used Twitter to attack the other. Authoritarian governments have learned to mimic social networking sites with their own propaganda.

But one does not have to be a "techno-utopian" to recognize the immense benefits of new communications technologies to democracy overall. It is not a new phenomenon. Western radio and TV broadcasts hastened change in Eastern Europe. Fax machines connected Chinese students to the outside world in 1989. The Internet then became pivotal in rallying widespread participation in civil resistance. In Serbia, Ukraine, Southeast Asia, Lebanon and Venezuela, text messaging mobilized popular demonstrations. In Iran, Twitter and Facebook became key connectors, though the regime tried intermittently to shut the networks down. In April 2008, Egypt's "Facebook Revolution" mobilized a general strike, and street actions over economic and political issues anticipated the events of the Arab Spring three years later.

Non-governmental international networks as disparate as the Genocide Intervention Network, the Sunlight Foundation (whose aim is making US governance "accountable and transparent"), the Gaza Reporting International Network or the International Center for Journalists all share the vocation of trying to get at the perceived truth. The disconsolate fact is that international news coverage has been in steep decline for years as print and electronic media close bureaus abroad. Writer Claire Berlinsky (2012) has documented an 80 percent drop in foreign coverage in US print and TV since the end of the Cold War. Non-traditional networks attempt to close the gaps.

Though access to outside reporting and other information is invaluable, the most vital contributions of Internet connections are to the internal discussions in countries without free media.

Moreover, new technologies radiate outward the witnessing function of a new internationalist culture of "netizens." Hand-held communications devices enable activists to witness and communicate real images of atrocity to the world as they unfold, via Internet uplinks in real time. Such netizens and bloggers made the whole world witness to the harshly violent repression of peaceful demonstrations in

Burma/Myanmar in 2007. The combination of netizens' digital cameras and global websites such as YouTube showed the world the tragic killing of Iranian student Neda Agha Soltan on a street in Tehran. The battered face of Khaled Said held a whole regime responsible for murder in Egypt. Such episodes demonstrate that it is becoming harder and harder for repressive regimes to use brutal force without being exposed.

There is, regrettably, every indication they will continue to try. There have been obvious recent high-profile examples of constrained societies adopting defensive moves, especially during periods of agitation or protest through targeted efforts to restrict Internet access and close off sites, and shutting down wireless networks.

In China, many foreign news outlet sites or specific news reports are periodically blocked or selectively filtered by "The Great Firewall" created by the Chinese government to keep Internet users from communicating freely with the outside world in an enduring effort to impose a considerable degree of censorship, especially when public protests occur such as in Tibet and Xinjiang.

Such walls have been circumvented with the assistance of supporters of access to outside information, including the US State Department, which has spent US$70 million in 2013 alone to support the development and deployment of anti-censorship software. The Global Internet Freedom Consortium, a private international NGO, developed FreeGate, software that bypasses the blockage of sites within a country by accessing rapidly changing servers outside of it. FreeGate can be downloaded by Internet users everywhere and was widely used during the shutdown of servers and sites in Iran in 2009.

Enabling "mesh networks" for cellphone communications has been critical for activists inside repressive countries when state-controlled networks are slowed during times of public protest and agitation to hinder the uplinking of Facebook postings and videos. The Chinese Internet Project at the University of California, Berkeley, the international Tor Project, and scholars at the Munk School of Global Affairs at the University of Toronto also provide programs that enable Internet users in closed societies to maintain access to outside news outlets, contacts with the outside world, and above all, continued communication inside the country among like-minded reform activists.

But as Professor Xiao Qiang, who heads the Berkeley Chinese Internet Project has said about the authoritarian regimes, "They're getting more sophisticated. They learn from past mistakes." The Chinese authorities studied episodes of protest in Eastern Europe and Iran to devise defensive technological intervention techniques, in an attempt to control communications, monitor email and define public opinion.

Sadly, Western-based technology companies have exported monitoring software and hardware that enable repressive regimes to take such measures to counter a free Internet. As John Seabrook (2013) reported in *The New Yorker,*

> Oppressive regimes from Syria to Bahrain use the latest cyber-surveillance tools, many of them made by western companies

> to spy on dissidents. Finfisher spyware, for example, made by Gamma International, a UK-based firm, can be used to monitor Wi-Fi networks from a hotel lobby, hack cell phones and P.C.s, intercept Skype conversations, capture passwords, and activate cameras and microphones. Egyptian dissidents who raided the office of Hosni Mubarak's secret police after his overthrow found a proposal from Gamma offering the state Finfisher hardware, software, and training for about four hundred thousand dollars.

These are commercial activities whose lawfulness is subject to whether or not international sanctions apply, but it should be clear that democratic embassies should not in any way be facilitating the commercial representation of companies seeking such opportunities.

While targeted attacks to limit connectivity are attractive defences to authoritarian regimes, they are also costly for the country's development. Competitiveness in a digital world, particularly in societies such as China or Iran where Internet users are multiplying daily, will be greatly hampered by limiting Internet access. A workforce without Internet access risks isolation. Cuban authorities seem to recognize belatedly that by continuing to block Internet access for young people, the regime will greatly handicap Cuba's future.

As technology continues to evolve, the tension between the formidable momentum toward open communication and repressive governments' wishes to control events will continue. Embassies do have a role to play, sometimes *in extremis* opening mission communications systems to local citizens.

A DIPLOMACY OF COMMITMENT

> Committed diplomacy — going beyond formal duty and applying a humanist perspective — not a legalist or a "realist one — to international relations is nested in the oldest tradition of that discipline…The diplomatic field can obtain concrete results, which enable the recognition, assistance, and even the freedom of victims of dictatorial persecution. No diplomat should feel out of bounds when doing so. Quite the opposite.
>
> — Pablo Brum and Mariana Dambolena, "On Diplomatic Commitment to Human Rights," *Documentos*, May 14, 2009

There is, in practice, a "right to be helped" as well as a "right to help." The role of outsiders is never primary, but their catalytic support can be pivotal.

In certain circumstances, where the legitimacy of direct support of civil society, especially advocacy groups, is challenged, NGOs, to which embassies should defer, often take up the slack. NGOs are not cats' paws of embassies or of national

interests per se, but they share developmental ideals and have a common interest in civil society's aspirations to democratic governance.

Diplomats cannot leave it to international civil society to support democracy development and human rights. On instruction, and even on personal initiative, diplomats increasingly intervene when necessary to defend and support threatened human rights defenders and democratic activists. To answer how this is best done varies with circumstances, either demonstrably in public view, or, as the case merits, privately, below the radar. Examples of both approaches — such as European diplomats accompanying Las Damas de Blanco on their peaceful marches in Havana, US Ambassador Mark Palmer marching with demonstrators in Budapest in 1989, or the ambassadors of several democracies attending the vigil of a Syrian activist murdered in custody — occur throughout the *Handbook.*

Consistent Messaging

Consistent messaging on human rights and governance is a central necessity. Commitment on human rights and governance issues is part of the country missions of many democracies, as agreed with authorities at home. A democracy has to be able to demonstrate democratic leadership by solidarity.

Sadly, there have been many examples when democratic values in the representation of a democracy's interests in diplomatic relations with an authoritarian state are contradicted by the obvious priorities placed on the pursuit of privileged economic relations or political support on security issues. There is no question that the Gadhafi regime in Libya gamed the attraction of economic contracts for Italian or Canadian business against what Libyan authorities evaluated as strictly pro forma representation on human rights by these countries' representations. In reality, security and economic interests can build a strategic relationship, which can then enhance the opportunity to communicate basic messages on human rights with greater effectiveness.

Of course, there can be pushback when diplomats take public positions of solidarity within the countries of accreditation to repressive regimes. The *Handbook* will illustrate the many ways this has happened in the past, including occasions when authoritarian governments attempted to intimidate or expel diplomats for legal activity in support of human rights. Iran provided another extreme example in 2009, where locally engaged employees of the UK Embassy not enjoying immunity were arrested and put on trial for subversion. In circumstances where local authorities are seeking to blame outsiders for internal protests whose legitimacy they do not wish to acknowledge, different outreach methods are required.

A MULTILATERAL PROJECT FOR DEMOCRACY SUPPORT AND THE COMMUNITY OF DEMOCRACIES

There is, of course, considerable activity in multilateral fora on human rights and democratic development; the *Handbook* project is itself an undertaking of a multilateral organization, the Community of Democracies.

> When the United Nations can truly call itself a community of democracies, the Charter's noble ideals of protecting human rights and promoting social progress in larger freedoms' will have been brought much closer.
>
> — UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, at the founding conference of the Community of Democracies, Warsaw, 2000

It is self-evident that the effectiveness of democratic development support is enhanced when democratic partners work together. There is no formal common strategy or work plan, however, although progress has been made in identifying desirable common approaches, such as in democracy education, the theme of the Mongolian presidency of the Community of Democracies 2012-2013.

There are variances in the extent to which democratic governments are comfortable pursuing democracy support agendas for other countries. In a seeming paradox, in their bilateral relationships, democracies such as India, Brazil and even South Africa tend to not wish to introduce issues that touch upon the internal affairs of partner states, possibly because of their own histories as colonies, even though the path to independence of many benefitted precisely from international solidarity.

The mixed record of multilateral organizations reflects the mixed governance of the nations of the world. Older democracies are more apt to charge their representatives with proactive mandates to connect directly to civil society and to support the efforts of democracy development, especially since the costs of inconsistency through the unquestioning support of regimes in Tunisia, Libya and Egypt became clear.

Some newer democracies prefer classic *realpolitik* diplomacy, demonstrating their solidarity with developing countries regardless of their governance. They place their priority on narrowly defined national interests in bilateral relationships over the notion that democracy proponents have a right to be helped and that democratic societies are inferentially engaged. But, as the *Handbook* illustrates, there are multiple examples of all democracies falling short of ideals as far as that is concerned.

The Role of the United Nations

Despite such variations in approach, democratic development is now a major theme at the United Nations, particularly through the UN Democracy Fund.

Moreover, UN agencies and programs place prominent emphasis on consulting with civil society in the field, including in peacekeeping operations, such as in Timor Leste, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Côte d'Ivoire.

The UN provides extensive commitment to free and fair elections through its electoral support unit and to democracy development through its development program. The UN Human Rights Council is meant to be a central instrument in the search for the advancement of human rights, although its effectiveness remains stymied by the manoeuvring of some non-democracies determined to block scrutiny of their human rights abuses. The doctrine of non-interference in internal affairs continues to be invoked as a principle protecting such states for not safeguarding the human rights of their citizens.

Intergovernmental Organizations and Agencies

Other intergovernmental organizations, such as the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and its Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, the Organization of American States (OAS) or the Commonwealth of Nations, consider democracy to be interdependent with the imperatives of economic development and human security, and commit programs to democracy development support.

International agencies help and advise in the technical organization and administration of elections, as well as the elaboration of electoral laws. Several development assistance programs support projects that are designed to assist and engage greater public understanding of how citizens benefit from and participate in the electoral process.

Regional and Inter-regional Organizations

Regional or inter-regional organizations, such as the European Union, the Council of Europe, the OSCE, the OAS, the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie or the Commonwealth of Nations, formally prescribe democratic practice as a precondition of membership and monitor and verify elections.

These organizations, however, vary widely in the extent to which they apply democracy criteria to membership. La Francophonie, for example, is more cultural than political in emphasis. It has suspended memberships to nations such as Mauritania, Madagascar, Mali and Guinea-Bissau, but includes several long-standing non-democracies such as Equatorial Guinea and Vietnam. Initiatives to agree to a charter that binds members to democracy have been dismissed.

The Community of Democracies reviews its membership and accredited observer countries regularly to verify they are indeed democratic. There have been multiple demotions, promotions and suspensions.

The Commonwealth of Nations has a history of democratic integrity that was forged over its exclusion of apartheid-era South Africa. The modern Commonwealth suspends membership of countries that depart from democratic norms. In recent

years, Pakistan, Zimbabwe and Fiji have been targeted by the membership for their abuses of democratic practice, and Zimbabwe, in fact, left the organization. While some members made efforts to embed a more strenuous commitment to a rule of law, democracy and human rights agenda in a new charter, it was turned aside by other members more committed to non-interference in internal affairs. A watered-down charter was adopted in 2013, committing members to "good governance," human rights and gender equality.

The OSCE, successor to the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), which had a key role in hastening the end of the Cold War, has generally been a disappointment since the founding members' conference and the adoption of the Charter of Paris in November 1990, in large part because several member states, most notably Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan, are clear violators of democratic principles and human rights. The Russian Federation has become an alienated participant as a result of what it believes is excessive criticism of its conduct regarding the situation in Chechnya and because of adverse OSCE monitoring of Russian elections.

When elections are at risk of being manipulated, a full range of international contacts and experience in mobilizing civil society can come into play. Ongoing NGO contacts had a key role in electoral crisis management, such as in Ukraine in 2004, or earlier in Slovakia, Croatia, Serbia and Georgia, and later in Kyrgyzstan. The success in redeeming the 2004 Ukraine election's integrity was due to the democratic and reform movements' mass protests and pressures, but over time, sustained international support from governments, embassies and people-to-people NGOs played an important background role, as the *Handbook* case study on Ukraine will demonstrate.

There is an important regional dimension. Evidence shows that mentoring emerging democracies from regional partners is particularly effective because of the shared perspectives of regional (and often social) adjacency. Members are taking the strengthening of capacity for democracy assistance within regional organizations more seriously, as the creation of an Asian democracy network at the 2013 Ministerial Meeting of the Community of Democracies illustrates.

The *Handbook*'s focus is on "in-country" mandates and activity associated with bilateral accreditations. But it is important to note that most countries, including non-democracies, have systematically signed on to the intentions and principles that the above multilateral organizations supposedly confer. These commitments are useful reminders in the practice of bilateral democratic diplomacy.

Bilateral Relations and the Value of Example in International Solidarity

The nation-state remains the most relevant context, however. States sign and hopefully ratify international conventions and organizations affirming the acceptance of human rights. But ultimately, these are subject to circumstances, laws and justice systems within states. Moral philosopher Tzvetan Todorov (2001) pointed out in his Oxford Amnesty Lecture that the inhabitants of most countries derive their legal

rights much more as citizens of states than as citizens of the world. The Community of Democracies therefore counts the strengthening of the capacity of states to assure the rights of its citizens as an important objective.

The *Handbook* and its case studies examine, in particular, what embassies and diplomats can do on their assignments in the field in dealings with civil society and local authorities to respond helpfully to requests to support democracy's development.

Of course, the odds against them can often seem uneven. As US author Robin Wright (2008) observes, the contests between "inexperienced democratic activists with limited resources" and regimes "who have no intention of ceding control" can seem an "unfair battle." While external support and mentoring skills can help the diplomats to succeed, outside allies and helpers must always follow the lead of domestic reformers and agents of change. We have seen in both Burma/Myanmar and Iran that security force crackdowns that are willing to use deadly force to support the status quo can obtain more time for an authoritarian regime, but its time will inevitably run out in favour of justice for the people.

Influence is often wielded through the power of example. Activists and reformers seek inspiration from models that other societies provide and take counsel from the comparable prior experiences of other reformers, most of which are relatively recent. After all, the consolidation of effective democratic systems is mostly a phenomenon of the latter half of the twentieth century, spurred by the aftermath of World War II, decolonization, the end of dictatorships in Greece, Portugal and Spain in the mid-1970s and, more recently, the end of Cold War competition.

The examples of non-violent conflict that were developed in the Indian independence movement and the US civil rights movement have provided strategic and tactical inspiration to hundreds of millions of aspiring democrats. More recently, the experience of the Solidarnosc ("solidarity") movement in Poland had immense influence beyond its region. Institutional example can be passed on, such as the Chilean effort to construct a Truth and Reconciliation Commission, whose model lent itself to later adaptations in Peru, South Africa, Rwanda and Morocco, as well as in other post-authoritarian and post-conflict locales. Civil society's response to threats to the integrity of election processes also takes instructive cues from those who experienced similar attempts elsewhere — an example being the learning process of Ukrainian democrats with transition veterans from other European countries such as Serbia and Slovakia.

Internal, domestic actions that were decisive in these and other struggles for democracy — the demonstrations, boycotts and other forms of non-violent civil resistance — drew from a supportive external framework of psychological, political and practical measures circumscribing the options of non-democratic governments.

Positions taken internationally by outside democratic governments and prestigious individuals can be crucial. In Chile, external support to civil society began with humanitarian action offering asylum to thousands of refugees after the coup d'état of September 11, 1973. For the next 15 years, the resulting diaspora of Chilean

exiles kept the repressive political condition of Chile high in the consciousness of democrats everywhere.

In consequence, trade union movements in Europe and North America, political parties, such as European social and Christian democrats, and individual political leaders, such as German Chancellor Helmut Kohl or US Senator Edward Kennedy, provided Chilean citizens with the confidence that they were not alone in the struggle that was beginning to build up against the Pinochet dictatorship's repression. Activists in South Africa recall the inspiration provided by US Senator Robert Kennedy's speech in South Africa in 1968, which was preciously preserved on forbidden long-playing records.

Not taking a position in support of democratic activists or reformers can also be negatively crucial. As President of Venezuela Carlos Andrés Pérez once said, non-response can be a form of intervention.

Repressive regimes also study prior examples.

Authoritarian regimes do try to claim legitimacy by pointing to support from countries reliant on them for security or other interests. As noted above, it is usual for democratic governments and their representatives to condition state-to-state cooperation (except humanitarian aid) on the modification of behaviour, but it is vital for democratic governments to do more than episode-by-episode protests of human rights violations. They need to maintain sustained programs of democratic development support, including insisting on ongoing dialogues with the host countries in order to deal with basic conditions, especially those affecting civil society. Even many authoritarian regimes feel obliged to feign some reformist intentions. These can provide democratic activists and reformers with potentially valuable openings and opportunities. Once it is clear, however, that engagement with host country authorities will be unproductive, or when a regime resorts to deadly force to try to preserve its authoritarian status quo, human rights dialogues can be counterproductive.

It is important, then, that democracies make their positions clear, to offset claims of international support by repressive regimes abusing their populations. A powerful method is coordinated international action for targeted sanctions, such as the embargo on petroleum products and arms on the South African apartheid regime. Coordinated sanctions also made South Africa's finances unsustainable, especially its expenses of equipping for war with front-line states. In this case, the crucial factor was that external sanctions were demanded by the ANC and the United Democratic Front (UDF), two South African anti-apartheid movements. A vital question today is the extent to which international solidarity is available: if rich petro-states or others unsympathetic to democracy counter sanctions with their own economic aid, the effect is weakened.

Sanctions can also be controversial because they can hurt the innocent in an oppressed society, unless they carefully target the accounts, assets and international mobility of the oppressors themselves. The US sanctions and embargo on Cuba have long been held up as being more punitive than remedial. Sanctions on Iraq during the

1990s were also judged by many as being both ineffective and destabilizing to the population as a whole. On the other hand, targeted sanctions by the European Union, the United States and others against members of the Burmese judiciary responsible for the legal persecution of opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi, and against state-run enterprises and the key personnel of the ruling junta had a definite impact on the improvement of the political landscape.

Of course, sanctions are a coercive tool that can only be deployed once (though they can be adjusted). Once used, the value of the threat of sanctions is spent. When a regime such as Zimbabwe's or Syria's decides that the sanctions are tolerable or can be evaded, their remedial effect is reduced.

The most counterproductive management of sanctions imposed for human rights abuse is their removal without visible improvement. Hugh Williamson and Steve Swerdlow (2013) of Human Rights Watch describes the lifting of the EU sanctions on Uzbekistan as a "litmus test of the challenge of dealing with an authoritarian government with which countries need to do 'business.'" It was an offence against consistency undermining the credibility of the EU's positions on human rights across the board.

The EU imposed sanctions on the Karimov dictatorship in Uzbekistan after security forces gunned down hundreds of peaceful protestors in Andijan in May 2005. Human Rights Watch reports that the EU then lifted the sanctions in 2009, "though Uzbekistan met none of the human rights conditions the EU had set." The EU's relaxed views stood in sharp contrast to the actions of international civil society, best exemplified by the International Committee of the Red Cross, which judged that Uzbekistan's intractable behaviour regarding political dissent and prisoners made it impossible to fulfill the its humanitarian mandate in the country.

A HANDBOOK TO SUPPORT DIPLOMATIC DEMOCRATIC COMMITMENT

Case Studies

All Situations Are Different

The Community of Democracies members' diplomatic missions can aspire to achieve representation on human rights, or activity in support of democratic development on the ground, through individual and sometimes concerted action. Chapter 3, on tool box applications, is meant to spell out the ways that such individual and coordinated efforts have succeeded, or not, in the past.

Chapter 3 sets out the sorts of opportunities and constraints that diplomats encounter in democracy development support from three perspectives: the resources and assets at a diplomat's disposal; the ways in which diplomats have deployed

these assets in support of civil society, democratic development and human rights in a multitude of situations over the last decades; and their applications in favour of local partners, policy goals and programs. Clearly, the local context is paramount, including the attitude, sometimes hostile, of local authorities.

It is emphasized that these are tools of "soft power," as opposed to sanctions from outside or armed revolt from the inside. A review of the many narratives of democratic transition of the last decades shows that just as democracy cannot be imposed on a people from outside, nor are democratic activists likely to succeed by using violent means from inside.

In reaching out, civil society groups have often turned to embassies or consulates of Community of Democracies' participating states for advice and assistance. There is no codified set of procedures for diplomats to follow in order to respond effectively. Each situation is different, presenting its own unstructured problems and opportunities, which diplomats need to interpret according to local as well as general merits, including the bilateral relationship itself. The actions of authorities in Iran — emulated in Russia — show that, faced with popular protest, repressive regimes can construct a false narrative of foreign interference and contest the legitimacy of any contacts between diplomatic representatives and local civil society. This can be potent when popular memory recalls a history of foreign interference.

Over the last decades, the activity of diplomats from democratic countries constitutes a considerable record of experience with almost every eventuality. On the basis that the record of such activity could provide helpful guidance to practitioners in the field, the *Handbook* attempts to record it. Increasingly, the Handbook also describes the work of international civil society and NGOs in support of democracy development, which is assuming an ever-larger responsibility for engaging civil society in transitional countries.

This *Handbook* identifies a tool box of creative, human and material resources available to missions. It records the ways in which missions and diplomats, and to some extent NGOs, have drawn from these tools in the past in the interest of democracy development support. The *Handbook* means to cover a full range of conditions and situations, from regimes that are flatly undemocratic and repressive, to phases of post-conflict recovery, to democratic transition and consolidation.

The *Handbook* includes a representative variety of case studies, documenting and explaining specific country experiences. While it is important that each case study be seen for its specific contextual properties, there are characteristics that obviously recur. Moreover, it should always be borne in mind that activities and outcomes in one locale might have ripple effects in the region and on wider or other specific relationships. Each country and situation is different, but there are common patterns in how international solidarity benefits extended struggles for human rights and self-determination.

We also hope to catalogue the growing number of examples of "older" democracies adapting democratic techniques from "younger" ones. The democratic learning experience is not all one-way, and capacity building continues for all. For example,

innovative Brazilian methods for enabling citizens to participate in budget-setting exercises in local government have been adapted for use in local government from Brooklyn, New York, to the United Kingdom.

A review of all these experiences bears out the validity of our belief in our interdependence, and hopefully provides practitioners with encouragement, counsel and a greater capacity to support democrats everywhere.

This *Handbook*, with its tool box and wide portfolio of case studies, is meant to be applicable to a wide variety of conditions. Diplomats of democratic governments have different challenges, depending on whether they are assisting democrats living under repressive regimes that actively abuse the population, supporting fragile emerging democracies in the process of transition, including in stabilizing post-conflict recovery conditions, or working with recently transformed democracies to consolidate democratic gains.

The country case studies reflect a wide distribution of experience, both geographically and chronologically: democratic societies flourish on every continent. The case studies are also selected to present an apt variety of transition types, but the country case studies focus principally on diplomatic activity to support in-country civil society prior to the end of authoritarian rule. In such countries, where democratic activists worked to end authoritarian conditions, transitions to democracy were greatly aided by their access to internationally administered programs over the years to develop their competence in law, economics and other key areas of governance in order to prepare for democracy. The importance of organized civil resistance as an "incubator" of democracy is stated in the introduction.

The first edition of the *Handbook* documented peaceful transitions in self-governance, such as in Tanzania. The obligation of democratic solidarity, however, must support a wide array of countries and civil societies in the difficult process of democratic development and consolidation, not just countries self-nominated by their strategic or other interests. The first edition also presented case studies of successful transitions from repressive societies to democracy, such as South Africa and Chile, and case studies of ongoing situations, such as in Burma/Myanmar and Zimbabwe, where repressive regimes were seemingly indifferent to outside counsel (at least from democracies), and where diplomats operate in difficult circumstances of minimal productive communication with host authorities, but continue to be seen as sources of encouragement and support by democratic activists in those countries. These latter two studies, as well as those on Belarus and Ukraine, are updated in this third edition, while the others are available online on the project website.

The second edition included case studies on China, Cuba and Egypt, important undemocratic countries facing challenging circumstances, where civil society and democracy activists were narrowly constrained, and where outside influence was officially contested. This third edition now includes new case studies on Tunisia, which sparked "the Arab Spring," and democracy in Russia, 1987–2013, which is as much an examination of the complexity of the policy process and lessons learned

from the standpoints of both the country in transition and the engaged democracies from outside, as it is of the activity of diplomats on the ground.

The third edition also includes updates of all the "live" cases where democracy is still in the balance. These run the gamut from revolution and uncertain aftermath in Egypt, through hopeful, but far from certain or complete reform in Burma/Myanmar, to questionable progress in Zimbabwe, and outright retreat from democracy in Ukraine and intensified repression in Belarus. The third edition includes unamended, but historically significant and evocative cases from Chile and South Africa, as well.

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